

REMARKS

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102 & 103

Claims 1-8, 13-15, 28 and 29

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Branderhorst et al (US 5,196,064, hereinafter “Branderhorst”) or, in the alternative under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over Lieher et al (US 6,487,986, hereinafter “Lieher”) in view of Branderhorst or Segerstorm et al (EP 0318071, hereinafter “Segerstorm”). Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiment of the present invention as recited in Claim 1 is not anticipated or rendered obvious by Branderhorst or Liehr in view of Branderhorst or Segerstorm for the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner to independent Claim 1 that recites an apparatus comprising:

an elongated lubricant vapor source comprising a chamber fluidly communicating with a plurality of primary plugs having an interior for supplying lubricant vapor, wherein each of the plurality of primary plugs comprises a drilled hole and two openings for transporting the lubricant vapor; and

wherein the lubricant vapor source comprises a plurality of threaded holes into which the plurality of primary plugs are screwed therein.

Claims 2-8, 13-15, 28 and 29 depend from independent Claim 1 and recite further patentable elements.

Page 3 of the rejection states that “Branderhorst et al features an elongated source (bridge plate 170) that comprises a chamber communicating with a plurality of primary plugs (110, 15)) [sic] and threaded holes that primary plugs are screwed into.” Applicants respectfully submit that Branderhorst fails to teach or suggest the features of “the lubricant vapor source comprises a plurality of threaded holes into which the plurality of primary plugs are screwed therein,” as recited in Claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Branderhorst teaches, “As shown in FIG. 2, bridge plate 170 comprises two bores 200 and 210 for receiving bulkheads such as 122 of nozzle assemblies 110 and 150 as shown in FIG. 1.” (col. 4 ln. 66 – col. 5 ln. 1). Thus, as illustrated in

Figure 2 Branderhorst's bores are smooth and not "threaded holes into which the plurality of primary plugs are screwed therein," as claimed in Claim 1.

Furthermore, Branderhorst teaches away from threaded holes. The MPEP states, "When the prior art teaches away from combining certain known elements, discovery of successful means of combining them is more likely to be nonobvious. *KSR*, 550 U.S. at ___, 82 USPQ2d at 1395," (MPEP 2143).

Applicants respectfully submit that Branderhorst teaches:

Holding cap 121 may then be torqued, and nuts 123 and 124 may be used to finely adjust the position of the tip 129 of nozzle 125 for proper alignment with respect to tip 161 of alignment peg 160. During this fine adjustment, because key 303 resides in keyway 201 and notch 304 of bulkhead 122, bulkhead 122 is prevented from rotating with respect to bridge plate 170.

Thus, Branderhorst adjusts the height of the bulkhead by screwing the nuts and preventing rotation of the bulkhead. Applicants respectfully submit that if the bridge plate was threaded and the bulkhead was screwed therein, it would be impossible to adjust the height of the bulkhead using the nuts without rotating the bulkhead with respect to the bridge plate. Therefore, Branderhorst teaches away from "threaded holes into which the plurality of primary plugs are screwed therein," as claimed in Claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Liehr and/or Segerstorm, either alone or in combination with Branderhorst, also fail to teach or suggest the features of "the lubricant vapor source comprises a plurality of threaded holes into which the plurality of primary plugs are screwed therein," as recited in Claim 1. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 1 is not anticipated or rendered obvious by Branderhorst or Liehr in view of Branderhorst or Segerstorm, thereby overcoming the 35 USC §102(b) and the 35 USC §103(a) rejections of record. Since Claims 2-8, 13-15, 28 and 29 recite further elements to those claimed in independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-8, 13-15, 28 and 29 are also not anticipated or rendered obvious by Branderhorst or Liehr in view of Branderhorst or Segerstorm. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-8, 13-15, 28 and 29 are allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the Claims are in condition for allowance and reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested. Allowance of Claims 1-8, 13-15, 28 and 29 at an early date is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including any extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-4160 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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